



## DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

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SECRETARY

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### **EPA announces Louisiana meets fine particulate air quality standard**

BATON ROUGE – Louisiana meets all air standards for the pollutant known as fine particulate matter 2.5, also known as PM 2.5, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced on Tuesday. After reviewing technical information provided by the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, EPA concluded that the state met the standard for the 2006 24-hour PM 2.5 standards.

PM 2.5 consists of tiny particles that pose a greater health risk than larger particles because they can lodge deep inside the lungs. Studies have shown that exposure to PM 2.5, which are generally one-30th the width of the average human hair, can cause cardiovascular disease, lung disease and asthma attacks.

“This is truly good news for the residents of your state,” said EPA Region 6 Administrator Richard Greene in a letter to DEQ Secretary Harold Leggett. “We challenge you to not only maintain, but also continue the progress you have made toward clean air.”

EPA is opening a public comment period and plans to make a final decision on PM 2.5 designations by Dec. 18, 2008.

“Meeting the particulate standard is of great importance because of the adverse health implications associated with PM 2.5,” Leggett said. “EPA’s recognition of Louisiana’s efforts to meet the PM 2.5 standard is a testament to the state and federal efforts to reduce particulate pollution in this state, and across the country.”

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